



News Release

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**STATE MOVES TO BAN NEW, REQUIRE CLOSURE OF OLD
LARGE CESSPOOLS, VEHICLE WASTE DISPOSAL WELLS**

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A public comment period is now open on proposed changes to shallow injection well rules that will ban the creation of new large capacity cesspools and motor vehicle waste disposal wells and require existing ones to be properly abandoned, the Idaho Department of Water Resources announced today.

Existing large capacity cesspools would have to be properly abandoned by January 2005 by the owner or operator. Currently used or existing motor vehicle waste disposal wells also would have to be properly abandoned by January 2005 either by the owner or operator.

IDWR officials say the rule changes are an effort to better protect Idaho's groundwater. Cesspools and vehicle waste disposal wells have a high potential for contaminating underground drinking water supplies. Because of that they were banned two years ago by the Environmental Protection Agency.

The IDWR injection well rule changes are designed to bring the state into line with the Federal guidelines and to clarify other language in the existing injection rules, IDWR officials said.

A public hearing on the changes was held October 30. The official comment period will be held open until 5:00 p.m. on November 7 for individuals who want to file written comments on the proposed changes, IDWR officials added.

Injection well specialists say large capacity cesspools or vehicle waste disposal wells do exist around the state but do not know how many there are of each kind. However, they believe there are not that many.

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Multiple dwelling residential complexes such as a duplex or apartment building typically use large capacity cesspools. Other large capacity cesspools are sometimes used by such facilities as rest stops, restaurants or churches.

The motor vehicle waste disposal wells generally are found at service stations, auto body repair shops and auto dealerships. They can also be found at automotive specialty repair facilities such as transmission, brake and muffler repair shops, fire stations, county or municipal garages or any facility that performs vehicle repair work.

Written comments can be filed with: IDWR, 1301 North Orchard Street, Boise, ID 83706 or by fax at (208) 327-7866. Following the comment period the proposed rules will go before the Idaho Water Resource Board and, if adopted by the Board, then will go to the Idaho Legislature for final approval.

For more information, contact Mike Piechowski at (208) 327-7956.